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FM AMEMBASSY DHAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7193

UNCLAS DHAKA 02166

S/CT FOR WHARTON

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: PTER BG
SUBJECT: BANGLADESH: 1987 ANNUAL TERRORISM REPORT

REF: STATE 42378

¶1. BANGLADESH.

¶2. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION:

THE GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZES THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION, WHICH MAINTAINS A DIPLOMATIC MISSION IN DHAKA. FOUR PLO REPRESENTATIVES APPEAR ON THE DIPLOMATIC LIST, AND APPARENTLY HAVE FULL DIPLOMATIC PRIVILEGES, INCLUDING IMMUNITY AND USE OF THE POUCH. AN ASSOCIATION OF APPROXIMATELY TWENTY PALESTINIAN STUDENTS IS ACTIVE IN THE PORT CITY OF CHITTAGONG. THE ASSOCIATION IS REPORTEDLY AFFILIATED WITH THE AL-FATAH GROUP OF THE PLO. THE STUDENTS HAVE DEMONSTRATED AGAINST U.S. POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND HAVE BURNED EFFIGIES OF PRESIDENT REAGAN AND ISRAELI LEADERS.

DOMESTIC INSURGENCY - THE SHANTI BAHINI:

A SIMMERING INSURGENT MOVEMENT IS ACTIVE IN THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS REGION WHERE SOME 600,000 TRIBAL PEOPLE LIVE. THE MOVEMENT REFLECTS CONCERN THAT THEIR TRADITIONAL WAY OF LIFE IN THE HILL AREAS WAS BEING UNDERMINED BY SETTLERS WHO MOVED THERE FROM THE OVERPOPULATED PLAINS. THE INSURGENTS ARE DEMANDING AUTONOMY FOR THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS WITHIN THE BANGLADESH STATE. ARMED CLASHES HAVE OCCURRED BETWEEN GOVERNMENT FORCES AND A GROUP OF TRIBAL INSURGENTS KNOWN AS THE SHANTI BAHINI ("PEACE FORCE"). THE SHANTI BAHINI HAVE CONDUCTED HIT-AND-RUN RAIDS AGAINST MILITARY PERSONNEL AND BENGALI SETTLEMENTS. OFFICIAL SOURCES CLAIM THAT IN 1987, 122 PERSONS WERE KILLED, 68 PERSONS WERE INJURED, AND 21 PERSONS WERE KIDNAPPED IN SHANTI BAHINI VIOLENCE.

¶3. MAJOR COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS UNDERTAKEN:

THE BANGLADESH GOVERNMENT HAS NO SPECIFIC RESPONSE CAPABILITY BEYOND EXISTING POLICE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURES. THE IMMIGRATION SERVICE IS AN ADJUNCT OF SPECIAL BRANCH, WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR INTERNAL SECURITY MATTERS. THERE ARE NO DESIGNATED ANTI-TERRORISM POLICE. ANY ARMED RESPONSE TO A TERRORISM SITUATION WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE HANDLED BY THE MILITARY, WHICH HAS NO KNOWN ANTI-TERRORIST CAPABILITY.

¶4. RESPONSE OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM:

POST IS UNAWARE OF ANY ACTION TAKEN BY THE BANGLADESH JUDICIAL SYSTEM WITH RESPECT OF MATTERS RELATING TO TERRORISM AFFECTING AMERICAN CITIZENS OR FACILITIES.

¶5. POSITION IN INTERNATIONAL FORA:

THE BANGLADESH GOVERNMENT HAS CONSISTENTLY SUPPORTED MEASURES TO PREVENT INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. IN INTERNATIONAL FORA, BANGLADESH HAS CONDEMNED AS CRIMINAL ALL ACTS, METHODS, AND PRACTICES OF TERRORISM WHEREVER AND BY WHOMEVER COMMITTED. TO POST'S KNOWLEDGE, THE

BDG HAS ENDORSED INTERNATIONAL ANTI-TERRORISM CONVENTIONS. BANGLADESH HAS SUPPORTED EFFORTS WITHIN THE SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION (SAARC) TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. BANGLADESH'S UNGA VOTING RECORD ON TERRORISM IS UNAVAILABLE AT POST.

DE PREE